

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 SAM-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01 EB-07 PC-01

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R 061300Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4881

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

MEMBASSY LILONGWE

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MAPUTO 0888

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINS, PINT, MORG, MZ

SUBJ: MOZAMBIQUE ASSESSMENT (1) -- WHO WIELDS POWER?

REF: MAPUTO 0886

1. SUMMARY: AFTER ONE YEAR IN POWER, PRESIDENT MACHEL IS CLEARLY THE UNDISPUTED LEADER OF MOZAMBIQUE. CONFIDENT, CHARISMATIC AND ENERGETIC, HE COMPLETELY OVERSHADOWS HIS CLOSEST ASSOCIATES AND POTENTIAL RIVALS --VICE PRESIDENT OF FRELIMO MARCELINO DOS SANTOS, MINISTER OF INTERIOR ARMANDO GUEBUZA AND FOREIGN MINISTER JOAQUIM CHISSANO. AS HEAD OF THE PARTY AND THE GOVERNMENT (FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES THE SAME
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BODY), AS WELL AS CONSULAR HEAD OF THE ARMY, MACHEL

WIELDS ENORMOUS POWER. ALTHOUGH LIP SERVICE IS GIVEN TO THE IDEA THAT MACHEL SHARES POWER WITH THE OTHER LEADERS OF THE FRELIMO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, TO THE EXTENT HE DOES SO IT IS BY CHOICE RATHER THAN NECESSITY. FOR THE MOMENT HIS POSITION APPEARS TO BE SECURE.

2. THE GOVERNMENT: WHILE MACHEL IS THE FOCAL POINT OF POWER, HE LEANS HEAVILY ON A SMALL GROUP OF MARXIST-ORIENTED MULATTOS AND GOANS IN FORMULATING POLICY. THIS GRUOP INCLUDES VICE PRESIDENT OF FRELIMO MARCELINO DOS SANTOS, MINISTER OF STATE OSCAR MONTEIRO, INFORMATION MINISTER JORGE REBELO AND CHIEF OF THE PRESIDENT'S CABINET SERGIO VIEIRA. ALTHOUGH WE CANNOT CONFIRM, MONTEIRO, REBELO AND VIEIRA, ALL OF WHOM WERE EDUCATED IN PORTUGAL, ARE SAID TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR WRITING MOST OF MACHEL'S ANTI-WESTERN SPEECHES AND MOST OF FRELIMO'S NATIONALIST AND MARXIST-ORIENTED PARTY DOCUMENTS. THEY ARE ALSO SAID TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE TO THE LOCAL MEDIA.

3. IN DEFENSE MATTERS, DECISIONS APPEAR TO BE MADE BY MACHEL, DEFENSE MINISTER ALBERTO CHIPANDE, DEPUTY DEFENSE MINIZTER SEBASTIAO MABOTE, INTERIOR MINISTER GUEBUZA AND TWO OR THREE ARMY COMMANDANTES ATTACHED TO THE GENERAL STAFF, INCLUDING JOAQUIM MANHEPE AND FERNANDO HONWANA. ON INTERNAL SECURITY MATTERS, INTERIOR MINISTER GUEBUZA, NATIONAL SECURITY SERVICE CHIEF JACINTO VELOSO, CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION CHIEF CARLOS RAPOSO PEREIRA AND POLICE CHIEF OSWALDO TAZAMA ARE SAID TO BE CONSULTED. DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC ISSUES ARE GENERALLY DEALT WITH BY MARCELINO DOS SANTOS WITH A CADRE OF RUSTED TECHNICIANS, INCLUDING NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION, JOAO BAPTISTA COSME AND ABDUL MAJID OSMAN, NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF FINANCES.

4. THE POLICIES FORMULATED BY MACHEL AND HIS "SUPER-ELITE" ARE IMPLEMENTED BY THE TECHNICAL MINISTRIES (AGRICULTURE, LABOR, PUBLIC WORKS, HEALTH, FINANCE, INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE AND TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS). THESE MINISTRIES RELY IN TURN ON A FLEDGLING NATIONAL

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BUREAUCRACY WHICH IS OVERWORKED, INEXPERIENCED AND UNDERSTAFFED. ON THR PROVINCIAL AND DISTRICT LEVEL, THE SITUATION IS WORSE: STAFFS ARE VERY THIN, WITH MANY KEY POSITIONS UNFILLED. OFTEN THE SAME OFFICIAL PERFORMS FUNCTIONS FOR SEVERAL AGENCIES. THE GOVERNMENT ALSO DEPENDS HEAVILY ON TWO INSTITUTIONS -- THE ARMY AND THE GRUPOS DINAMIZADORES -- TO ORGANIZE SUPPORT FOR THE GOVERNMENT AND PARTY PROGRAMS, TO PROTECT THE STATE

AGAINST INTERNAL THREATS AND TO CARRY OUT THE PRESIDENT'S SO
MANDATES. OWING TO TIGHT RESTRICTIONS ON TRAVEL, WE
KNOW VERY LITTLE ABOUT HOW THE GOVERNMENT OPERATES IN THE
PROVINCES.

5. OBSERVERS HAVE FREQUENTLY POINTED OUT THE REGIONAL
CMBALANCE IN THE MAKE-UP OF THE TOP GPRM LEADERSHIP.
WITH THE EXCEPTION OF GQEBUZA, WHO IS THE ONLY HIGH-
RANKING MACUA, AND CIPANDE AND MABOTE, WHO ARE NORTHERNERS,
ALL MEMBERS OF THE TOP LAYER ARE SOUTHERNERS. THIS BIAS
IS SOMETIMES MENTIONED AS A POSSIBLE SORE POINT AMONG THE
CENTRAL AND NORTHERN ETHNIC GROUPS, BUT HOW DEEPLY THIS
UNDER-REPRESENTATION IS FELT IS NOT KNOWN.

6. THE ARMY: MACHEL IS A MILITARY MAN, AND THE ARMY IS
HIS MAIN SOURCE OF POWER. HIS TIES TO THE MILITARY ARE
CLOSE AND STRONG. HE CAME UP THROUGH THE RANKS, RISING
RAPIDLY FROM A GUERRILLA RECRUIT TO BECOME CHIEF OF
FRELIMO OPERATIONS IN 1966, A POST HE HELD THROUGHOUT
THE ARMED STRUGGLE. SYMBOLIC OF HIS CLOSENESS TO THE
ARMY ARE HIS PROPENSITY TO WEAR MILITARY FATIGUES,
HIS PRESENCE AT VIRTUALLY ALL MAJOR AND MINOR MILITARY
CEREMONIES AND HIS TENDENCY TO INCLUDE COMMANDANTES
(SENIOR OFFICERS) AS MEMBERS OF HIS OFFICIAL OVER-
SEAS ENTOURAGE.

7. EXPANDED FROM AN INITIAL CADRE OF LESS THAN
5,000, THE ARMY NOW NUMBERS MORE THAN 20,000. IT IS
DIVIDED INTO BATTALIONS WITH THE OVERWHELMING PROPORTION
NOW DEPLOYED ON THE RHODESIAN AND SOUTH AFRICAN BORDERS.
BASE CAMPS EXIST IN ALL PROVINCIAL CAPITALS. ELITE
UNITS SUCH AS THE MILITARY POLICE HAVE BEEN FORMED,
AND HAVE IN LARGE PART TAKEN OVER SECURITY RESPONSIBILITIES
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IN MAPUTO. LEADERSHIP IS STILL IN THE HANDS OF VETERANS
OF THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE, ALTHOUGH A YOUNGER, BRIGHTER
ELEMENT RECRUITED AFTER THE END OF FIGHTING IS MAKING
AN APPEARANCE. EVERY FOUR MONTHS THE MILITARY ACADEMY
AT BOANE GRADUATES 300 OR SO NEW OFFICERS.

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AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

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8. TRIBALLY, THE LEADERSHIP OF THE ARMY, AS WITH THE GOVERNMENT IS IN THE HANDS OF MACHEL'S CONFRERES (SHANGAAN SPEAKERY) FROM THE SOUTH. THE MAKONDE, THE BACKBONE OF THE ARMY DURING THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE, DO NOT FIGURE PROMINENTLY IN THE NEW ARMY. AS FAR AS WE CAN DETERMINE, THERE ARE NO MACUA OR MAKONDE IN THE UPPER RANKS OF THE MILITARY LEADERSHIP. (NEITHER DEFENSE MINISTER CHIPANDE NOR HIS DEPUTY, SEBASTIAO MABOTE ARE MAKONDES, ALTHOUGH THEY HAVE FREQUENTLY BEEN LABELLED AS SUCH.)

9. WHILE THE ARMY IS SAID TO BE LOYAL TO MACHEL, WE DO NOT KNOW HOW LOYAL. OUR KNOWLEDGE OF HOW THE ARMY IS RUN, WHO THE KEY LEADERS ARE, AND WHAT COMMANDS THEIR ALLEGIANCE IS EXCEEDINGLY LIMITED. IN DECEMBER
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1975 A 400-MAN BATTALION REVOLTED IN MAPUTO FOR THREE DAYS. REASONS FOR THE REVOLT ARE GIVEN AS UNHAPPINESS OVER PAY, THREATS OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION AND FEELINGS OF DISCRIMINATION ON THE PART OF NORTHER, MOSTLY

MAKONDE SOLDIERS. TO WHAT EXTENT SALARY, ETHNIC OR OTHER DIFFICULTIES STILL FESTER IS DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE. WE ARE FAIRLY CERTAIN THERE IS SOME DISGRUNTLEMENT SINCE PAY REMAINS LOW AND IRREGULAR, AND RATIONS, QUARTERS AND EQUIPMENT ARE POOR. OCCASIONAL DISCIPLINARY ACTION AGAINST ARMY PERSONNEL SUGGESTS TO US THAT THE PRESIDENT IS AWARE OF WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE ARMY.

10. FRELIMO: THE BASIC UNITS THROUGH WHICH THE PARTY OPERATES ARE THE GRUPOS DYNAMIZADORES OR DYNAMIZING GROUPS. THE GRUPOS FUNCTION AS POLITICAL SOCIALIZAION VEHICLES AND CONTROL, MOBILIZE AND INDOCTRINATZ THE POPULATION, AS WELL AS MAKE SURE THE PARTY LINE IS ADHERED TO. THEY ARE ALSO USED TO IMPLEMENT GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED HEALTH AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND TO ADJUDICATE CIVIL COMPLAINTS. SINCE FRELIMO REGARDS ITSELF AS A VANGUARD PARTY , THE GRUPOS SERVE AS THE MECHANISM THROUGH WHICH ORDINARY CITIZENS BECOME FULL-FLEDGED PARTY MEMBERS.

11. THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NATIONAL NETWORK OF GRUPOS HAS BEEN TRULY PHENOMENAL; TODAY GRUPOS EXIST IN EVERY HAMLET, ON EVERY FARM AND IN EVERY FACTORY. IN MOST CASES THEY WERE INITALLY ORGANIZED BY TRUSTED FRELIMO VETERANS SENT TO THE COUNTRYSIDE TO ORGANIZE PARTY CELLS, WITH SUPPORT FROM THE NEAREST POLICE AND ARMY UNITS. BECAUSE OF THE HASTE WITH WHICH THE GRUPOS WERE ESTABLISHED, THERE HAVE BEEN PROBLEMS OF WEAK OR CORRUPT LEADERSHIP AND OF GRUPOS ARROGATING TOO MUCH POWER. THE PARTY IS TRYING TO CORRECT THESE FAULTS. TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH PARTY POLICIES, THE LOCAL GRUPOS HAVE BEEN DIRECTED TO LOOK TO THE PEOPLE'S FORCES FOR THE LIBERATION OF MOZAMBIQUE (FPLM) FOR GUIDANCE, MOTIVATION AND EXAMPLE. (IN MANY RURAL AREAS, THE GRUPOS ARE IN FACT CONTROLLED BY THE LOCAL COMMANDANTES.)

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12. THE FRELIMO CONSTITUTION CALLS FOR PERIODIC PARTY CONGRESSES AND STIPULATES THAT THE OVERALL DIRECTION OF THE PAGTY WILL BE PROVIDED BY A CENTRAL COMMITTEE. IN PRACTICE, MACHEL AND A HANDFUL OF PARTY LEADERS DETERMINE PARTY POLICY. MACHEL'S INFLUENCE OVER THE PARTY AND THE GRUPOS DOES NOT LIE SOLELY IN HIS PARTY POSITION NOR IN HIS INFUENCE OVER THE VETERAN PWRTY COLLEAGUES WHO EXERCISE MORE DIRECT CONTROL OVER THE GRUPOS; IT ALSO HAS MUCH TO DO WITH HIS DOMINWTING PERSONALITY AND TREMENDOUS ORATORICWL SKILLS WHICH HAVE WON FOR HIM A LARGE PERSONAL FOLLOWING AMONG

RANK-AND-FILE PARTY WORKERS.

13. THE FUTURE: FOR THE MOMENT, MACHEL'S POSITION APPEARS TO BE SECURE. NONE OF HIS CLOSE ASSOCIATES HAVE THE PERSONAL FOLLOWING, POWER BASES OR CHARISMA TO SERIOUSLY CHALLENGE HIM. FRELIMO VICE PRESIDENT DOS SANTOS HOLDS A STRONG POSITION WITHIN THE PARTY BUT LACKS BOTH A MILITARY AND REGIONAL POWER BASE. GUEBUZA, WHO HAS EMERGED AS THE NUMBER THREE MAN IN THE PARTY, IS AGGRESSIVE AND CUNNING AND HAS CONTROL OVER THE POLICE, BUT AS YET APPEARS TO HAVE LITTLE INFLUENCE IN THE ARMY, ALTHOUGH THIS COULD CHANGE. JOAQUIM CHISSANO, WHO SERVED AS PRIME MINISTER OF THE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT, WAS INDIRECTLY CENSURED BY THE PARTY DURING ITS 8TH CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING IN FEBRUARY 1976, AND HIS FORTUNES HAVE WANED. ANY SERIOUS CHALLENGE TO MACHEL'S LEADERSHIP WOULD PROBABLY HAVE TO COME FROM WITHIN THE ARMY, WHICH STILL SEEMS VERY MUCH UNDER HIS CONTROL.
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